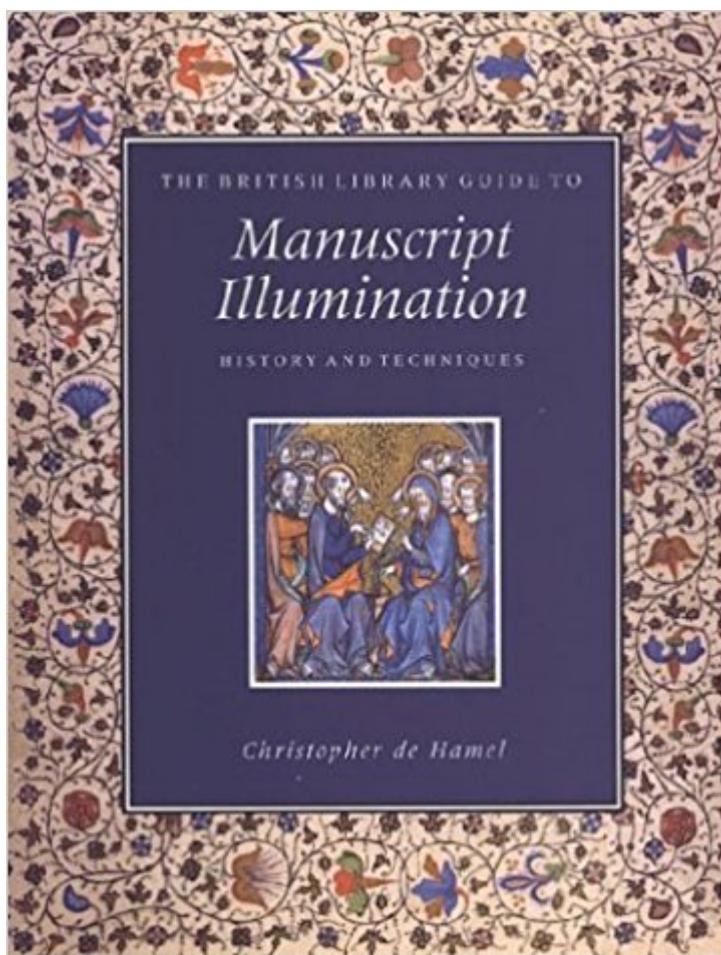


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# The British Library Guide To Manuscript Illumination: History And Techniques (British Library Guides)



## **Synopsis**

Medieval manuscript expert Christopher de Hamel selects and discusses a range of illuminated manuscripts from The British Library's unparalleled collection, some of them unfinished and so revealing the processes involved in an illuminator's work. He also explores the role of illuminators in the medieval book trade - how books were commissioned, the patron's expectations, how illuminators worked with scribes, the materials and techniques they used, and the time and expertise involved in creating some outstanding masterpieces of medieval art. With over 70 colour and black-and-white illustrations, The British Library Guide to Manuscript Illumination is an authoritative and engaging guide to one of the central aspects of medieval bookmaking for anyone interested in medieval art, social history, calligraphy, or illumination. One of a series of accessible and lively introductions to the history of books and how they are made.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Christopher de Hamel is the Head of the Department of Manuscripts at Sotheby's London and author of *Scribes and Illuminators* (Medieval Craftsmen Series).

This book is a wonderful introduction to the history and process of medieval manuscripts and manuscript illuminations. There may be few words in comparison to other books, but this book for certain does not have any wasted words. What is especially pleasant in this book are the many

color plates and even more black and white (gray scale). These images are strategically laid out and matched to the text, allowing the illuminated manuscripts themselves complete what is lacking in text. Considering the price and number of color pictures, this book is a great deal. Even without necessarily reading it again, I will return to it many times just to relish in the illuminations themselves. For these reasons and more I give this book a 5 star rating.

This is a brief, yet thorough introduction to the methods and history of manuscript illumination. After purchasing this book as a birthday gift for my sister, I read in only four evenings. I meant only to browse; but De Hamel's eloquent, affable writing style provided relaxing, fun and informative non-fiction reading. His logical presentation of technical information and facts are easy to re-assemble into a clear, basic understanding of medieval, European illumination. Non-European illumination is mentioned but not discussed in this introductory text. Though not picture-laden, images are clearly reproduced and efficiently illustrate concepts discussed in the text. My curiosity is peaked and I look forward to learning more about manuscript production and conservation.

I have been a fan of Christopher de Hamel's for many years. As I am a Calligrapher/Lettering artist, I am particularly interested in the processes used in Medieval times to illuminate or write out a Manuscript and have always found his books immensely readable and full of information. Although 'paperbacks', this and other books of his are beautifully illustrated with clear text with a touch of humour! Anyone interested in Manuscripts, book binding, Calligraphy should definitely invest in de Hamel's books as they are worthwhile additions to one's bookshelf.

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